

February 11, 2023

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Fabiola Molina, M.D. I am a physician trained in Internal Medicine and a post-doctoral research fellow in the National Clinician Scholars Program at Yale School of Medicine. I live in New Haven, Connecticut. I am also a formerly undocumented individual who grew up in a mixed immigration status family.

I stand in strong support of proposed H.B. No. 6616 “An Act Concerning Expansion of Husky Health Benefits to Those Ineligible Due to Immigration Status.”

My support for the expansion of HUSKY health benefits to all income-eligible individuals regardless of immigration status is informed by two important aspects of my identity. First is my personal history of being a formerly undocumented individual and the second is from my professional background as a physician who has cared for undocumented patients and researcher who has sought to understand the barriers facing undocumented immigrants in accessing care.

I am originally from Mexico and moved to the United States when I was five years old. I grew up in Texas where my family, some of whom continue to be undocumented, currently live. On top of the trauma and fear that I experienced growing up undocumented in what were often hostile anti-immigrant environments we also lived in fear that someone in our family would get sick and need more than the most basic preventative care available to individuals who are undocumented. No human being should live in fear that they won’t have the health care they need.

I now have the privilege of being a naturalized U.S. citizen and consider it part of my moral responsibility to continue advocating for equitable health care to all people regardless of immigration status. As a physician my medical training has taken me to states from California, to Massachusetts, and now to Connecticut. In each of these states I’ve seen the myriad challenges undocumented individuals face in accessing health care without health insurance and I’ve also witnessed the catastrophic consequences of delayed care. In my first month of my medical internship, I delivered the tragic news of a diagnosis of liver cancer to a kind man who after weeks of symptoms had finally sought care in the emergency room. Fear in his eyes, he asked me- *“Doctora, how will I get care? I’m undocumented.”*

I strongly support H.B. 6616 because expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is a critical step to ensuring the health and well-being of all Connecticut residents. Connecticut can be a national leader by extending health coverage to some of our most vulnerable community members. Immigrants are part of the fabric of our communities – ensuring they have adequate health coverage is a minimum standard of what we can and should do. As a physician, I should never have to look an individual in the eye to deliver a cancer diagnosis while also delivering the news that the treatment they need is inaccessible due to their immigration status.

I urge the committee to support H.B. 6616 and stand up for the residents of Connecticut, regardless of immigration status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Molina', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fabiola Molina, MD

Internal Medicine Physician and Post-doctoral Research Fellow

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